\_\_\_\_\_

# The Soviet Aesthetics of Aleksandr Voronsky: A Brief Exposition

Man is not an exclusively rational animal, but he does not belong among completely irrational animals either. — Aleksandr Voronsky<sup>1</sup>

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Aleksandr Voronsky (1884–1937) is a figure who is not well known in aesthetic theory outside Russian or Slavic studies. An Old Bolshevik and leading Marxist aesthetician during the Lenin-Trotsky Soviet regime, he was also the editor of *Red Virgin Soil*, the premier literary journal of the Soviet 1920s.<sup>2</sup> After Vladimir Lenin's death, he became a member of Leon Trotsky's Left Opposition against Josef Stalin and was finally executed in the Great Purge of 1936 to 1938, his political "rehabilitation" coming twenty years later in 1957.<sup>3</sup> Voronsky had almost no presence in the English language until 1998, when twenty-six major articles, essays, and speeches of his from 1911 to 1936 were published in *Art as the Cognition of Life*.<sup>4</sup>

Although it has now been almost fifteen years since Voronsky was introduced in English, there has been no scholarly effort to exposit his views on art.<sup>5</sup> This is not a surprising development, considering that Soviet Marxism, even its pre-Stalinist form, is not academically fashionable. There is the additional difficulty that Voronsky must compete against a formidable A to Z of thinkers associated in academe with Marxist, neo-Marxist, and post-Marxist positions, such as Adorno, Althusser, Bakhtin, Benjamin, Eagleton, Horkheimer, Jameson, Lukács, Macherey, Marcuse, and Žižek; however, since Voronsky once had a significant cultural presence, his thought merits serious academic examination.

Voronsky was "our best literary critic," in the words of the exiled Trotsky. While this appraisal from the author of *Literature and Revolution* (1924) may be reliable, the formal indication is that Voronsky was a specialist. This observation tends to be confirmed in *Art as the Cognition of Life*, which has little to nothing to say about architecture, dance, design, film, handicraft, music, painting, printmaking, and sculpture. When Voronsky uses the word "art," he is mostly talking about literature (drama, fiction, and poetry) in the context of "Marxist literary criticism." Still, there are things he says that are aesthetically generalizable and applicable to the other arts, and particularly notable is his method of aesthetic evaluation.

## II. MARXISM-PLEKHANOVISM

Classical Marxism sees art as one of several forms of social consciousness. These forms are ideas in multiplicity and variety, definite expressions of which correspond to (1) a legal and political superstructure that is (2) conditioned by the mode of production of material life, (3) whose

foundation is the *economic structure of society*, (4) which is constituted by the *sum total of the relations of production*, (5) that being the outcome of the *material production of human life itself* that generates *definite human social relations* appropriate to development of the *material productive forces*. Here, the various sides of the process operate in "reciprocal action" on one another. 9

Accepting the schema, Voronsky distinguishes between "structure" (economic, political, and family life) and "superstructure" (a system of instincts, knowledge, norms, and tastes, not merely ideas). He also refers to structure as the "economic base" and superstructure as a "formation of ideological values," the latter arising from the former. The superstructure, in further explanation, is a "multifaceted complex of instinctive reactions and habits, *followed by* views, ethical norms, opinions, convictions, aesthetic tastes, scientific knowledge, beliefs, superstitions, doubts, and so forth." The superstructure is an "entire interlinked and unique cultural complex." 12

As for art, it is one of the "different aspects of social consciousness" and develops under the decisive condition of "social-historical milieu." "Works of art," Voronsky says more directly, "are products of the social consciousness of a given social class." Understanding that art matures on the basis of particular features of class psychology (feelings, thoughts, and moods), he says *sociological evaluation* is the "first requirement" to determine (1) the degree of correspondence of class psychology to the social interests of the ruling class historically and (2) the place, role, and weight of given artistic doctrines and generalizations in the "current" social struggle. <sup>15</sup>

These ideas are from Georgi Plekhanov, the founder of Marxism. <sup>16</sup> Voronsky states Plekhanov's view that identification of the "sociological equivalent" in art is one of the basic, necessary tasks of Marxist criticism, but this is not enough. Sociological evaluation must be "supplemented" with *aesthetic evaluation*. <sup>17</sup> The reason is because the sociological equivalent does not determine and measure how an artistic discovery or work corresponds to objective truth. <sup>18</sup> Still, sociological evaluation, *with* aesthetic evaluation, has a "final and decisive" role in determining "how true or false" a work is (with respect to its place, meaning, and weight) in the practical activity of social life. <sup>19</sup>

Sociological evaluation has "first" and "final" place for Voronsky, yet his argument is not for a *mere* historical sociology of art. Without aesthetic evaluation, Marxist art criticism is incomplete. Since truth is central for aesthetic evaluation and is the "basic problem in art," according to Voronsky, one must inquire after a definition.<sup>20</sup> Truth is (1) correspondence of "sensations and conceptions" to the "actual 'nature of things"; (2) the "character of an objective portrayal" in "subjective thoughts and feelings"; and (3) containment or reflection in "subjective states" of "what is happening or what has happened in reality." Truth is also intuitive, adds Voronsky, and, in this respect, associated with the unconscious.

## III. ART AND THE UNCONSCIOUS

Voronsky is an aesthetician who is fundamentally influenced by Vissarion Belinsky (Hegelism), Nikolai Chernyshevsky (Feuerbachism), and Georgi Plekhanov (Marxism). But it is Belinsky and Plekahnov whom he refers to as "our teachers" who taught that "poetry is truth in the form of contemplation, that the poet thinks in images but does not fantasize at will, and that art is the same as philosophy, the same as science, but that it simply takes the form of contemplating ideas in images." This is a paraphrase of Belinsky, and Voronsky applies the idea, which was embraced by Plekhanov, in the general psychologistic definition that "art is the *cognition* of life" or "art is the cognition of life with the help of images."

Basically, what Voronsky takes from Belinsky/Hegel, Chernyshevsky/Feuerbach, and

Plekhanov/Marx is dialectics, materialism, and the materialist conception of history. This, however, is only a rough three-fourths of the picture. Voronsky does not say it outright, but he is also a student of Sigmund Freud and an appropriator of psychoanalysis. The literary critic takes the strong defensive position that "Freudianism is *incompatible* with Marxist literary criticism," and "Freudianism can *by no means* replace Marxism." Nonetheless, he has studied Freud's theory of the dynamic unconscious and makes use of selected psychoanalytic terminology within his Belinskian-Plekhanovian theoretical framework:

- the conscious
- the unconscious
- the active unconscious
- the surface of consciousness
- the sphere of the subconscious
- the storage areas of the unconscious<sup>25</sup>

Freud's psychoanalysis is based on reductive physiological materialism, but Voronsky uncovers "idealist constructions," the "mark of subjectivism and idealism," and "hyperbolization of unconscious and sexual forces." He says Freudian aesthetics, focusing on hidden unconscious impulses in symbol-images, is a form of philosophical idealism that neglects the "reflection of reality," ignores the "dependence of consciousness on the external world," and is devoid of historicity and sociology. There are "negative elements" in Freudianism, and these things are "unacceptable." One such negative element is the arbitrary and one-sided emphasis on "sexual attractions" over the powerful stimuli of hunger and social impulses.

According to Voronsky, Freud's doctrine introduces nothing fundamentally new to Marxist method, for the "unconscious has never been denied by Marxists in psychology, or even more so in art." Despite the claim that Marxism anticipated Freud, Voronsky says, "The theory of the dynamic unconscious *teaches* [one] to regard with very great circumspection any rationalist interpretations of the motives and deeds of the heroes and characters of the work being analyzed." Why there should be caution is because the conduct and utterances of the literary hero, even real-life people, are "*almost always* rooted in the [irrational] unconscious." This is a Freudian notion, as when Voronsky says,

The dynamic unconscious, introduced by Freud's psychoanalysis, reveals *more precisely* the content of the concept of intuition. Intuition is our active unconscious. Intuitive truths are authentic and indisputable; they require no logical verification and frequently cannot be verified by logical means precisely because they undergo preliminary development in the subconscious realm of our life and then reveal themselves immediately, suddenly and unexpectedly in our consciousness, as if they were independent of our "ego," and not subject to its preliminary work.<sup>33</sup>

Voronsky's psychoanalytic borrowing is not inconsistent with his defense of Marxism. As is known, the Lenin-Trotsky regime was favorable to Freud, unlike the Stalin regime that came to power in 1924.<sup>34</sup> During cultural debates that year, Trotsky said psychoanalytic theory was reconcilable with materialism.<sup>35</sup> And as psychoanalysis was collapsing under Stalinism in 1927, Trotsky argued that it is too simplistic to declare that Freudianism and Marxism are "incompatible," even if Marxists are under no obligation to adopt psychoanalysis. Freudianism is a "working hypothesis" and a form of "materialist psychology" and, as such, cannot be rejected

out of hand.36

## IV. AESTHETIC EVALUATION

Aesthetic evaluation is significant for Voronsky. At the time of this writing, one practitioner of the method is David Walsh, the Trotskyist film critic and arts editor of the *World Socialist Web Site*. The closest he comes to a definition is as follows: "In science, logical evaluation holds sway; in art, aesthetic evaluation," and, "We insist that art today needs the element of scientific appraisal like never before in the modern era." The implication here is that aesthetic evaluation is *analogous* to logical evaluation but that art and science are different intellectual domains. Even so, aesthetic evaluation has systematic, methodical, knowledge-producing, and empirically verifiable qualities.

But Voronsky's intuitive truth, justified with Freud, can come across as problematic. Radical empiricists would deem it mysterious. A. J. Ayer, for instance, says intuitions are worthless because they diverge between individuals, providing material for the psychoanalyst and not truth about a matter of fact. Ayer, however, would go further. He would say the aesthetic evaluation, consisting of "aesthetic judgments," is not objectively valid; it is value biased; it expresses feelings and evokes responses; it cannot be argued; and it is unverifiable, being neither true nor false. A scientific aesthetics is the psychology of art and the sociology of art. Only sociological evaluation can be permitted.

Voronsky would counter that Ayer is too narrow and rationalistic, applying the "abstract scientific method" of natural science to art, which leads here to "meager, abstract and empty general propositions." The Marxist aesthetician would add, after Plekhanov, that "reason poorly reconciles itself to art." Art is concrete, turns to people's sensual nature, and cognizes with images in living, sensual contemplation. Art is also a means of communication, and "aesthetic emotions serve social concerns." Aesthetics without aesthetic evaluation is a waste of time. Natural science studies the physical world, but people also live in a complex social and psychological world of attitudes, feelings, thoughts, and values. Voronsky explicates aesthetic evaluation in four definitions.

#### **DEFINITION 1**

The aesthetic evaluation in art corresponds to the logical evaluation in science. The aesthetic evaluation as we understand it is not some walk across a tightrope, or the savoring of beauty, or aesthetic appreciation in the name of aesthetic appreciation. To evaluate a work aesthetically means to determine the extent to which the content corresponds to objective artistic truth. For the artist thinks in images: the image must be artistically true, i.e., it must correspond to the nature of what is portrayed. In this lies perfection and beauty in the work of an artist.<sup>45</sup>

# **DEFINITION 2**

When does the artistic image appear convincing? When we experience a special psychic state of joy, satisfaction, elevated repose, love or sympathy for the author. This psychic state is the aesthetic evaluation of a work of art. Aesthetic feeling lacks a narrowly utilitarian character; it is disinterested, and in this regard it is organically bound up with our general conceptions of the beautiful (although, of course, it is narrower than these concepts). The aesthetic evaluation of a work

is the criterion of its truthfulness or falseness. Artistic truth is determined and established precisely through such an evaluation. 46

#### **DEFINITION 3**

In art, as in science, our subjective sensations must have objective significance. In art, the truth is cognized by means of aesthetic evaluation. The aesthetic evaluation is made as a result of the sensation that the artist has correctly, comprehensibly and accurately constructed his images for us. But while constructing his images in accordance with reality, the genuine artist is never a simple mirror reflecting life's phenomena, although neither does he merely create them from within himself.<sup>47</sup>

#### **DEFINITION 4**

Our mind takes an active part in the creation of the image, but an even greater part in its creation belongs to unconscious creative work. The image is aesthetically evaluated, and the aesthetic evaluation is not devoid of rationalistic elements, but in its underlying core it is also intuitive. Therefore there is no foundation to say that the definition of art as thinking with the help of images suffers from narrow rationalism. Only such a definition gives a satisfactory answer, from the standpoint of Marxism, to the question: what is artistic truth? 48

As these definitions reveal, Voronsky's aesthetic evaluation is not a simple method, as it combines intuitive and rational procedures. Intuition, however, is not something mysterious, mystical, or transcendental. Generally, "intuition is nothing but the truths, discovered at some time by previous generations with the help of rational experience, which have passed into the sphere of the subconscious." That is to say, intuitions are forms of "deep" (to use the psychoanalytic term) accumulated cultural knowledge. They may turn out true or false; they can be proven and confirmed with experience-based analysis; and they can be confirmed or refuted with analytical reason. <sup>50</sup>

Voronsky, a dialectical materialist of the Marxist-Plekhanovist school, maintains that subjective sensations can have objective significance because "being determines consciousness." Ascertaining artistic truth through sociological evaluation *and* aesthetic evaluation, criticism, he says, translates a work from the language of intuition to that of logic. Criticism explains what art means in the context of emotional and social experience, experience being the basis of "genuine art." What is achieved through artistic experience has objective value, not least because the object of art is nature, human society, and people's thoughts and feelings, imaginatively and concretely apprehended and transmitted to the world. 54

# V. CONCLUSION

Marxist aesthetics is usually presumed to be an economics, history, politics, and sociology of art, not really concerned with "aesthetics," with emotion, feeling, and perception. Soviet aesthetics is in an even worse situation, its pre- and non-Stalinist forms obscured by the Stalin-era and post-Stalin dogmas of "Marxism-Leninism," "socialism in one country," and "socialist realism," along with straight-jacketing interpretations of Marx's socioeconomic doctrine and Lenin's theory of reflection. David Walsh has said that to read Aleksandr Voronsky amid all this is to breathe

fresh air.<sup>56</sup> Voronsky's combination of Belinsky, Plekhanov, and Freud is indeed different.

Given the prolonged neglect Voronsky has experienced despite the publication of *Art as the Cognition of Life* in 1998, this paper has attempted a concise and to-the-point exposition of his basic aesthetic ideas, focusing broadly on his Marxist-Plekhanovism, his understanding of art and the unconscious, and his method of aesthetic evaluation. The intention is to reflect on and help prepare for a more in-depth construal of Voronsky's aesthetic theory, and as such, it is deemed premature at this point to address his notions of "perfection and beauty" or "genuine art," as briefly indicated. Suffice it to say that Voronsky is neither an absolutist nor a snob on these matters.

Voronsky represents a "strikingly humane tendency in Marxist criticism," and he was the "most sensitive and genuine Marxist critic of the twenties." The beautiful, genuine, and perfect for him is the honest, realistic, and truthful portrayal. (His examples are Shakespeare and Tolstoy.) Aesthetic qualities and aesthetic evaluation take complete precedence over a search for "criminal phrases and expressions." Lastly, on the theory of art as cognition, there has been quite a bit of research on the subject. Subsequent studies of Voronsky should bring him in dialog with other theorists who have engaged the problem, and his ideas should be judged accordingly.

ALZO DAVID-WEST Aichi Prefectural University Aichi 480-1198 Japan

EMAIL: adavidwest@yahoo.com

<sup>1</sup> Aleksandr K. Voronsky, *Art as the Cognition of Life: Selected Writings*, 1911–1936, trans. and ed. Frederick S. Choate (Oak Park, MI: Mehring Books, 1998), 190.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The Old Bolsheviks were the pre-revolutionary Russian Marxists who sided with Lenin following the 1903 political split between the Bolshevik (majoritist) and Menshevik (minoritist) tendencies in the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP). Voronsky joined the Bolshevik wing of the RSDLP in 1904.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See Frederick S. Choate, "Foreword," in *Art as the Cognition of Life: Selected Writings, 1911–1936*, by Aleksandr K. Voronsky, trans. and ed. Frederick S. Choate (Oak Park, MI: Mehring Books, 1998), vii–xxiii.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Voronsky's semifictional autobiography *Waters of Life and Death* (1928–1929) was published in translation by G. Allen and Unwin in 1936 and Hyperion Press in 1975. A translated essay, "Evgeny Zamyatin," appears in *Russian Literature Triquarterly*, Vol. 2, 1975, 153–75.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Searches on Academic Search Elite, Google Scholar, the Modern Language Association International Bibliography, and Questia provide no references to published academic articles, books, or reviews on *Art as the Cognition of Life*. See criticism of Voronsky, originally published in 1968, in Robert A. Maguire, "The Theory of Literature," *Red Virgin Soil: Soviet Literature in the 1920's* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2000), 188–259.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Leon Trotsky, "The Deportation," in *My Life*, Marxists Internet Archive, 5 February 2007, <a href="http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1930/mylife/ch44.htm">http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1930/mylife/ch44.htm</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> The phrase "Marxist literary criticism" appears three significant times in Voronsky, 174, 188, 200.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "The Real Basis of Ideology," in *The German Ideology*, Marxists Internet Archive, <a href="http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01c.htm">http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01c.htm</a>; Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Proletarians and Communists," *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Marxists Internet Archive, 2000, <a href="http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-">http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-</a>

manifesto/ch02.htm; and Karl Marx, "Preface," in *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Marxists Internet Archive, <a href="http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-pol-economy/preface.htm">http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-pol-economy/preface.htm</a>.

<sup>9</sup> Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "The Illusion of the Epoch," in *The German Ideology*, Marxists Internet Archive, <a href="http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01b.htm">http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01b.htm</a>.

```
<sup>10</sup> Voronsky, 157.
```

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Ibid., 195.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Ibid., 157; emphasis added.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Ibid., 193.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Ibid., 213.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Ibid., 119–20.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Despite the influential claim adopted by Samuel H. Baron that Plekhanov is the "father of Russian Marxism," Voronsky, 21, 22, says, "Plekhanov is not only the father of Russian Marxism, but of Marxism in general," for "it was Plekhanov who brought everything together into a system."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Voronsky, 120.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Ibid., 120, 332.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Ibid., 332.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Ibid., 323.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Ibid., 327, 332, 333.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Ibid., 83–84.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Ibid., 98, 102, 295; italics in original. Voronsky, 225, explains that "the main organ through which art functions is intuition; artistic cognition is intuitive." Accordingly, the definition of art as the cognition of life must be understood as art as the *intuitive* cognition of life. Characterization of the definition as "psychologistic" means that it emphasizes sensory-mental cognitive states and operations in the social life of art. Voronsky's connection of art and intuition is from Georgi Plekhanov, who says that, in the aesthetic view of "social man," beauty is perceived by intuition, and "the sphere of intuition is far larger than that of reason." Voronsky's psychologism is premised on the Marxist-Plekhanovist view that "man's consciousness is determined by his existence" and that "social psychology is expressed in the art and esthetics of a given period." See Plekhanov's "French Drama and Painting of the 18th Century," Marxists Internet Archive, February 2008, <a href="http://www.marxists.org/archive/plekhanov/1905/french-drama.htm">http://www.marxists.org/archive/plekhanov/1905/french-drama.htm</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Voronsky, 200–01; emphasis added.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Ibid., 205, 208, 292, 340, 343. Alluding to Freud's psychoanalysis, Voronsky, 340, says "scientific psychology has . . . firmly established that apart from the human states which are consciously experienced, there is a dark and secretive unconscious life. What is even more important, it is highly active: most of the time our consciousness serves as the obedient tool of the unconscious, concealing the genuine unconscious intentions and deeds."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Ibid., 182, 197, 199.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Ibid., 182, 196.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Ibid., 188.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Ibid., 188–89.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Ibid., 186, 192–93.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Ibid., 187; emphasis added.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Ibid.; emphasis added..

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Ibid., 186; emphasis added.

- <sup>34</sup> See Martin A. Miller, *Freud and the Bolsheviks: Psychoanalysis in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998).
- <sup>35</sup> Leon Trotsky, "Communist Policy toward Art," in *Literature and Revolution*, Marxists Internet Archive, 6 January 2007, <a href="http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1924/lit\_revo/ch07.htm">http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1924/lit\_revo/ch07.htm</a>.
  - <sup>36</sup> Leon Trotsky, "Culture and Socialism," World Socialist Web Site,

http://www.wsws.org/articles/2008/oct2008/cult-o23.shtml.

- <sup>37</sup> David Walsh, "Lecture Seven: Marxism, Art and the Soviet Debate over 'Proletarian culture,' Part 1," *World Socialist Web Site*, 30 September 2005, <a href="http://www.wsws.org/articles/2005/sep2005/le71-s30.shtml">http://www.wsws.org/articles/2005/sep2005/le71-s30.shtml</a>.
  - <sup>38</sup> Alfred Jules Ayer, *Language*, *Truth and Logic* (New York: Dover Publications, 1952), 106, 120.
  - <sup>39</sup> Ibid., 106, 108–09, 113.
  - <sup>40</sup> Voronsky, 194.
  - <sup>41</sup> Ibid., 371.
  - <sup>42</sup> Ibid., 99.
  - <sup>43</sup> Ibid., 284, 370.
  - <sup>44</sup> Ibid., 329.
  - <sup>45</sup> Ibid., 120.
  - <sup>46</sup> Ibid., 328.
  - <sup>47</sup> Ibid., 329.
  - <sup>48</sup> Ibid., 334.
  - <sup>49</sup> Ibid., 208.
  - <sup>50</sup> Ibid., 207.
  - <sup>51</sup> Ibid., 324.
  - <sup>52</sup> Ibid., 207.
- <sup>53</sup> Ibid., 111. Compare with the ideas in John Dewey's *Art as Experience* (New York: Penguin Group, 2005).
  - <sup>54</sup> Voronsky, 116, 177.
- <sup>55</sup> See Edward M. Swiderski, *The Philosophical Foundations of Soviet Aesthetics: Theories and Controversies in the Post-War Years* (Hingham, MA: D. Reidel, 1979). Swiderski does not mention Voronsky.
- <sup>56</sup> David Walsh, "David Walsh: Reading Voronsky on Art Today Is to Breathe Fresh Air," *World Socialist Web Site*, 21 January 2010, <a href="http://www.wsws.org/articles/2010/jan2010/mehr-j21.shtml">http://www.wsws.org/articles/2010/jan2010/mehr-j21.shtml</a>.
- <sup>57</sup> Edward J. Brown, "The Critic Voronsky and the Pereval Group," in *Russian Literature since the Revolution*, revised and enlarged ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 153–65, 156. Victor Erlich concurs, saying, "A more flexible and humane brand of Marxist criticism was championed by Alexander Voronsky." See Erlich's *Modernism and Revolution: Russian Literature in Transition* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 89.
  - <sup>58</sup> Voronsky, 109.
- <sup>59</sup> Ibid., 120. Voronsky is subscribing to the aesthetic principle summed up by Trotsky as follows: "A work of art should, in the first place, be judged by its own law, that is, by the law of art." See "The Formalist School of Poetry and Marxism," *Literature and Revolution*, Marxists Internet Archive, 7 January 2007, http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1924/lit revo/ch05.htm.
- <sup>60</sup> See, for example, Charles M. Dorn, *Mind in Art: Cognitive Foundations in Art Education* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999); Arthur D. Efland, *Art and Cognition: Integrating the Visual Arts in the Curriculum* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002); Howard Gardner, *Art, Mind, and Brain: A Cognitive Approach to Creativity* (New York: Basic Books, 1982); Jerry R. Hobbs, *Literature and*

Cognition (Stanford, CA: Center for the Study of Language and Information, 1990); Roman Ingarden, Cognition of the Literary Work of Art (Evanston, IL: Northwest University Press, 1979); Tone Roald, Cognition in Emotion: An Investigation through Experiences with Art (New York: Rodopi, 2007); Robert L. Solso, Cognition and the Visual Arts (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996); and Mark J. P. Wolf, Abstracting Reality: Art, Communication, and Cognition in the Digital Age (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000).

# Bibliography

- Ayer, Alfred Jules. Language, Truth and Logic. New York: Dover Publications, 1952.
- Brown, Edward J. "The Critic Voronsky and the Pereval Group." In *Russian Literature since the Revolution*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982.
- Choate, Frederick S. "Foreword." In *Art as the Cognition of Life: Selected Writings, 1911–1936*. By Aleksandr K. Voronsky. Trans. and ed. Frederick S. Choate. Oak Park, MI: Mehring Books, 1998, vii–xxiii.
- Dewey, John. Art as Experience. New York: Penguin Group, 2005.
- Erlich, Victor. *Modernism and Revolution: Russian Literature in Transition*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994.
- Maguire, Robert A. "The Theory of Literature." In *Red Virgin Soil: Soviet Literature in the 1920's*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2000, 188–259.
- Marx, Karl. "Preface." In *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. Marxists Internet Archive: <a href="http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-pol-economy/preface.htm">http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-pol-economy/preface.htm</a>.
- Marx, Karl, and Frederick Engels. "The Illusion of the Epoch." In *The German Ideology*, Marxists Internet Archive: <a href="http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01b.htm">http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01b.htm</a>.
- ------. "The Real Basis of Ideology." *The German Ideology*. Marxists Internet Archive: <a href="http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01c.htm">http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01c.htm</a>.
- Miller, Martin A. Freud and the Bolsheviks: Psychoanalysis in Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998.
- Plekhanov, George V. "French Drama and Painting of the 18th Century." Marxists Internet Archive, February 2008: <a href="http://www.marxists.org/archive/plekhanov/1905/french-drama.htm">http://www.marxists.org/archive/plekhanov/1905/french-drama.htm</a>.
- Swiderski, Edward M. *The Philosophical Foundations of Soviet Aesthetics: Theories and Controversies in the Post-War Years*. Hingham, MA: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1979.
- Trotsky, Leon. "Communist Policy toward Art." *Literature and Revolution*. Marxists Internet Archive, 6 January 2007: <a href="http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1924/lit\_revo/ch07.htm">http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1924/lit\_revo/ch07.htm</a>.

- ——. "The Formalist School of Poetry and Marxism." In *Literature and Revolution*. Marxists Internet Archive, 7 January 2007: <a href="http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1924/lit\_revo/ch05.htm">http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1924/lit\_revo/ch05.htm</a>.
- Voronsky, Aleksandr K. *Art as the Cognition of Life: Selected Writings, 1911–1936.* Trans. and ed. Frederick S. Choate. Oak Park, MI: Mehring Books, 1998.
- Walsh, David. "David Walsh: Reading Voronsky on Art Today Is to Breathe Fresh Air." *World Socialist Web Site*, 21 January 2010: <a href="http://www.wsws.org/articles/2010/jan2010/mehr-j21.shtml">http://www.wsws.org/articles/2010/jan2010/mehr-j21.shtml</a>.
- ———. "Lecture Seven: Marxism, Art and the Soviet Debate over 'Proletarian Culture,' Part 1." *World Socialist Web Site*, 30 September 2005: <a href="http://www.wsws.org/articles/2005/sep2005/le71-s30.shtml">http://www.wsws.org/articles/2005/sep2005/le71-s30.shtml</a>.